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The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA®) and Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL®) Announce Formal Relationship to Develop Schools Focused “Core SCORM”

Washington, DC September 14, 2007 - The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA) and the Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) Initiative announce the formal partnership expanding on their current positive working relationship by outlining development activities focused on better enabling teaching and learning for schools across the globe.

The partnership activity is focused on the development and implementation of a new version of the widely-implemented *SCORM®* reference model into school software applications by enabling its use with the successful *Schools Interoperability Framework Implementation Specification*.

ADL's Sharable Content Object Reference Model's (SCORM) aim has been to foster creation of reusable learning content as "instructional objects" within a common technical framework for computer-based and Web-based learning. SCORM describes that technical framework by providing a harmonized set of guidelines, specifications, and standards based on the work of several distinct eLearning specifications and standards bodies. ADL has recently announced its interest in defining a version of the SCORM that is 100% based on open *de jure* standards and has given this version the working name of "Core SCORM".

Core SCORM will form the foundation of this ADL-SIFA partnership activity. The two organizations will leverage the SIF Association's community - made up of hundreds of schools, states, national and international governments and vendors – to convene around the successful development and implementation of a Core SCORM for schools. In the tailoring of this new specification to address the specific needs of the school educational software marketplace, a key deliverable will be the use of Core SCORM within the SIF Specification and extending to meet the needs of educators worldwide. The SIF Specification is not a product, but a technical blueprint for school software that will enable diverse applications to interact and share school data seamlessly. The SIF Specification is an open standard that any technology provider or schools can develop to and implement.

The initial activities will include pilot activities of the use of SCORM within the SIF Specification and bringing together, as SIFA has done for over 10 years, the entire education community to

further define specific needs and challenges with interoperability between these teaching and learning applications. The bringing together of teachers, administrators, vendors and developers is vital in meeting the needs of the educational community.

“As pK-12 educational organizations, government agencies and vendors utilize educational technology more comprehensively for teaching, learning and administration, the need for interoperability becomes paramount. With the increased accountability and expectations in schools today, linking accurate interoperable educational data to the right learning resources for individuals is the “holy grail” for using technology for real and measured improvements in learning. The development of “Core SCORM for Schools” and SIFA’s commitment to collaboratively developing and leveraging standards will make that quest become a reality.” said Dr. Larry Fruth, Executive Director of SIFA.

“Core SCORM will help bring together the collection of Profiles based on open “de jure” technical standards and harmonize them into a common set of practices, policies and requirements across the global learning community. The SIFA-ADL partnership will leverage the work that SIFA and ADL have done, gather requirements unique for schools, facilitate how school applications fit into the Core SCORM framework and further enable interoperability for schools.” stated Paul Jesukiewicz, Deputy Director of ADL.

A Joint Executive Brief will be available shortly on the SIFA web site www.sifinfo.org and the ADL web site www.adlnet.gov. For additional information, please contact Jill Abbott, jabbott@sifinfo.org or Paul Jesukiewicz, pjesukie@ida.org.

About the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative

The ADL Initiative, sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), is a collaborative effort between government, industry and academia to establish a new learning distribution environment that permits the interoperability of the learning tools and course content on a global scale. ADL promotes collaboration in the development and adoption of tools, specifications, guidelines, policies and prototypes that make distributed learning accessible, adaptable, affordable, durable, interoperable, and reusable. For further information, visit <http://www.adlnet.gov>.

About The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)

SIFA is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 600 schools, districts, states, the U.S. Department of Education, international government agencies, software vendors and consultants who collectively define the rules and regulations for educational software data interoperability. The SIF Specification enables diverse applications to interact and share data efficiently, reliably, and securely regardless of the platform hosting those applications. SIFA has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <http://www.sifinfo.org>.